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### YEAR OF MODEL LICENSE PLATES

HB 1150, a bill I sponsored on behalf of statewide car collectors, became law this session. Beginning in 2008, original Indiana license plates may be displayed on antique automobiles. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles is in charge of final implementation. I would like to thank Washington resident Jim Pirkle and members of the 20th Century Chevy Car Club for their assistance on this legislation.



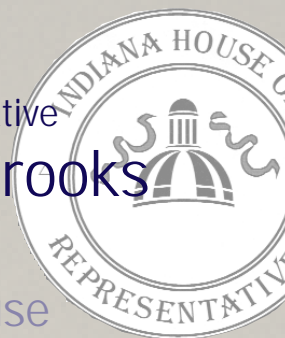
Rep. Crooks explains to Representatives his year of model license plate proposal.

### Representative Dave Crooks

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# Representative Dave Crooks

Working for You



Helping Hoosier Families



Property Tax Relief



## 2006 Session Report



# Additional Property Tax RELIEF

At the start of the 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly, property tax relief was identified as a priority by members of both parties. When the smoke cleared, we were able to provide some relief for homeowners.

This year, about 1.5 million homeowners will receive a one-time increase in the state homestead credit from 20 to 28 percent. This credit will provide around \$100 million in property tax relief in 2006.

In 2007, the state homestead deduction will increase from \$35,000 to \$45,000 for one year only. This relief will provide an additional \$127 million in relief for homeowners.

Starting in 2008, the state will gradually phase in a cap on property tax bills at two percent of a home's value. This cap would apply to all classes of property in Indiana, starting in 2010.

While this relief is welcome, it still does not make up for the massive increases in local property taxes that were passed on to home and business owners through the biennial state budget approved in 2005 by the majority party. At the time, that budget—which I voted against—increased the burden on local property taxpayers to the tune of an estimated \$850 million.

## Indiana protects homeowners from Eminent Domain

In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that local governments can use the process of eminent domain to take a person's property in order to hand it over to a private developer.

Many of you expressed your concerns about the ruling, and I began working with other Indiana lawmakers on a plan to protect the property rights of Hoosiers. Months of bipartisan work by a study committee has resulted in legislation that tightens Indiana's eminent domain laws and restricts the ability of most government units to seize private property and transfer it to private entities for development.

The new legislation sets strict standards for property acquisition for private development through eminent domain, and limits its use to only truly blighted and decaying properties. This will prevent developers from being able to have a local government use eminent domain to seize your property simply because they think it might be a good spot for a new strip mall.

## Time Zone Debate

I authored HB 1014 this session. The bill would have allowed Hoosiers the opportunity to vote on a unified time zone for the state.

However, legislative leaders and the Governor blocked this proposal—as well as additional time zone amendments I drafted—from being debated. I still believe the state should find a way to put most of Indiana on one time zone instead of further dividing our state between two time zones.



Rep. Crooks debates the Governor's Major Moves proposal with the Majority Caucus Chair.



Rep. Crooks, Gov. Daniels and Lt. Gov. Skillman present Washington business owners Jerry and Sharon McDonald with a 50 year Business Award.

## A summary of new legislation

### FUNERAL PROTESTS

New legislation increases the penalty for disorderly conduct occurring near the location of a funeral, memorial service, or viewing. The bill is largely in response to a group from Kansas that has chosen to stage hate protests at the funerals of Hoosier soldiers killed in action, using the occasion to make a political statement.



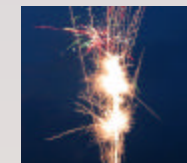
### SCHOOL SAFETY

We have attempted to ensure the safety of schoolchildren and to protect school employees by making possession of a knife on school property or a school bus a Class B misdemeanor, punishable by up to a 180-day prison term or a fine of \$1,000.



### FIREWORKS LAWS

I raised concerns to colleagues for the past several years regarding Indiana's fireworks law. The former law allowed Hoosiers to purchase fireworks as long as they took their fireworks out of state or launched their fireworks at select sites around the state. What a sham! I felt strongly it was time to fix this law. I co-authored a bill that passed this session allowing Indiana residents to launch fireworks on their own property, with certain restrictions. An additional five percent public safety fee on the retail sale of fireworks has been added and funds generated will go to the Indiana Department of Homeland Security with the bulk of new funds designated for training programs for our volunteer and professional firefighters.



Rep. Crooks discusses the fireworks legislation with bill co-author David Frizzell (Indianapolis).



Rep. Crooks researches a bill prior to voting.

### MAJOR MOVES

The 2006 session of the Indiana General Assembly will be remembered for Major Moves, the Governor's program to lease the Indiana Toll Road for \$3.8 billion to a foreign group for the next 75 years. The implications of Major Moves will be felt in Indiana for years to come. If anything, more time was needed to fully analyze the impact of Major Moves.

I met with Governor Daniels in hopes of convincing him to conduct statewide public hearings to fully explain his proposal to the public. However, he did not agree with my idea. Furthermore, people across the district have asked the following question about Major moves more than any other. "If a private company can make a healthy profit operating our roadways, why can't the state do it and keep the profits for 75 years?"

### SEX OFFENDERS

A series of bills continue our state's efforts to crack down on sex offenders. The bills clarify the designation of "sexually violent predator," require sex offenders to wear GPS tracking devices, establish lifetime parole for these offenders, ban sex offenders' access to locations where children may be present, keep better track of sex offenders' whereabouts with the new DOC sex offender registry, and make the crime of human trafficking of a minor a felony.

